

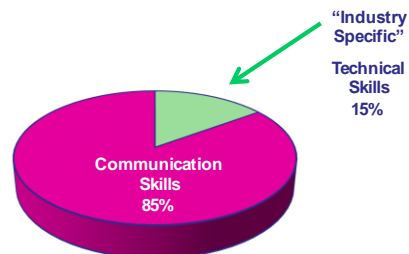
Dealing with Difficult Clients In A Difficult World

Program Designed For . . .
Individuals & Organizations
Committed To Service Excellence

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1

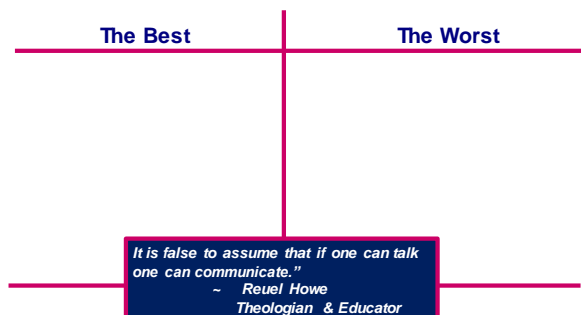
Communication Success . . .



2

In A Difficult World -- Serving Difficult Clients . . .

Service Representatives -- Are They All The Same?



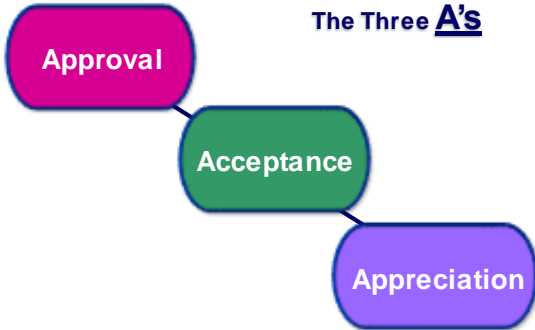
3

Confident Communicators . . . Here Are The Signs

- Credible -- Easy to persuade when you are trusted.
- Intelligent -- People relate to intelligent speakers more quickly
- Strategic Thinker - Understands audience and can adapt quickly
- Passion -- Is an asset to persuasion.
- Information -- Sensitive to issues, challenges.
- Facts -- Has prepared and information is well documented.
- Control -- Calmness is inviting.
- Connection -- Can find common ground with audience.
- Understanding -- Knows what turns an audience on and off.

4

Basic Needs of All People The Three A's



5

Communicating Their Way!

Golden Rule

Treat others the way you would like to be treated.

(Assumes Similarities)

Platinum Rule

Treat others the way they would like to be treated.

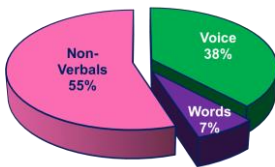
(Accepts Differences)



"We have committed the golden rule to memory. Now let us commit it to practice."

6

Communication Impact



... when connecting with others.

7



8

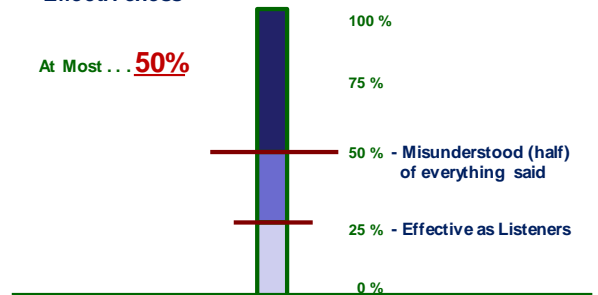


"People may not remember who you are
or what you did, but they will always
remember how you made them feel."
~ Maya Angelou

9

Communication Effectiveness

At Most . . . **50%**



10

10

Communication Guidelines . . . The Basics

- Build self - esteem
- Build breadth and depth of knowledge.
- Live a pattern of cooperation.
- Build an "emotional bank account" with others.
- Understand interaction styles -- adjust your style as needed.
- Use the platinum rule.
- Mirror! Mirror! Mirror! -- reflect what you see and hear.
- Listen! Listen! Listen!
- Practice the skill of artful vagueness.
- Protect the other person's ego by looking for the good.
- Seek first to understand others point of view before trying to persuade others to your way of thinking.
- Stop value judging others.
- Understand the other person's motivation.

11

11

Communication Guidelines . . . The Basics

- Understand that what is right to the other person is right as he / she sees the situation.
- Develop an appreciation that no one's full meaning can be understood by word alone.
- Think before you speak.
- Question your listener to check for understanding.
- Resolve disagreements quickly.
- Say it once.
- When you are wrong, admit it.
- Let the other person save face.
- Argue the other side first.
- Clear up misunderstandings before they become serious problems.
- Watch your attitude!
- Read your audience.
- Weigh carefully how your words, tone of voice and body movements are impressing your audience.

12

12

Active Listening Guidelines

1. Prepare yourself to listen.
2. Create a positive listening environment.
3. Fight off distractions.
4. Be sensitive to your "hot spots."
5. Maintain eye contact.
6. Use body language to reinforce listener.
7. Remain open and neutral.
8. Don't interrupt -- hear the complete story.
9. Don't trust important facts to memory.
10. Listen selectively.

*If You Want
Customers And
People You Work
With To Be Your
Raving Fan, Then
They Will Need To
Feel **SPECIAL**
When They Leave
That Telephone
Call Or Your Office.*

13

13

Active Listening Guidelines

11. Pause before responding.
12. Ask questions.
13. Eliminate value judging.
14. Recognize emotions.
15. Empathize with the speaker.
16. Restate main point.
17. Use speaker's words to get own point across.
18. Stick to speaker's subject.
19. Ask speaker, "What is your suggestion?"
20. Get agreement.

*"Nothing is quite so
annoying as to have
someone go right on
talking when you're
interrupting."*

14

14

**Client
Expectations**

15

Customers Want . . .

- **To be heard**
- **Someone to dump on**
- **Service**
- **Service NOW!**

Their Psychological Needs



- ✓ **To Be . . . Understood**
- ✓ **To Feel . . . Welcomed**
- ✓ **To Feel . . . Important**
- ✓ **To Feel . . . Comfort**

16

16

15

How The Customer Sees You Is Affected By. . .

1. Their wants and needs!
2. Their perception of the quantity and quality of service you provide!

17

17

From The Client's Point Of View . . .



18

18

Service Rule

The Client May Not Always Be Right,
But
The Client Is Still The Client.

"All customers must know, from the second they hear your first hello, that you care about them and are profoundly committed to treating them honorably and honestly."

~ Rick Brinkman, Authors
Pleasing Hard to Please Customers

19

19

To Be Successful . . .

Use language that offers client ways to

- ❖ Save them time
- ❖ Save or make them money
- ❖ Improve the quality of their life

" . . . quality means quality of work, quality of information, quality of people, including workers, managers and executives, quality of organization, quality of objectives, etc."

20

20

Client Expectations

- To have efficient, courteous service.
- To be treated as a person and not as a number.
- To have their questions answered and problems solved.
- To trust the organization's commitment to follow through.
- To feel important.
- To be helped by competent people.
- To know help is available when needed.
- To know their "business" is valued.

"If there is any secret of success, it lies in the ability to get the other person's point of view and see things from his angle as well as from your own."
~ Henry Ford

21

21

Quality Service

- Be prepared for the customer.
- Be positive.
- Recognize and praise people.
- Build rapport.
- Don't share your problems.
- Act as if you are the organization.
- Use humor appropriately.
- Use problems as opportunities.
- Surprise the client by doing more than expected.
- Be as good as your word.
- Give added value service.

"Your business success depends on how well you meet your customer's feelings and solve their problems." ~ Michael LeBoeuf, Author

22

22

Behaviors Which Foster Quality Service

- Smile.
- Service time -- "I'll be right with you."
- Pleasant voice tone -- Remember, "it is not what you say . . ."
- Greet the customer first.
- Statement of personal concern -- "How are you today?"
- Talk only to the customer.
- Client language.
- Actively listen.
- Offer additional assistance.
- Statement of appreciation.
- Use the client's name.

"When a customer hangs up their telephone receiver, at the conclusion of a phone call with you, they ought to feel special."
~ Stephen Coscia, Author
Customer Service Over The Phone

23

23

"We Tend To Dislike Most In Others Those Faults Or Weaknesses Of Which We Are Most Guilty."

Characteristics Of Difficult Client

They . . .

- | | |
|-----------------|------------------------|
| • Want it now | • Demand attention |
| • Argue | • Know it all |
| • Pull rank | • Criticize |
| • Complain | • Won't follow through |
| • Procrastinate | • Gossip |
| • Devious | • Arrogant |

"Look for the gifts -- the things that every unpleasant encounter can teach you about dealing with ugly human behavior."
~ Rebecca Morgan, Consultant

24

24

Why Complaints Are Valuable

- It is information you would not have otherwise.
- It gives you an opportunity to correct the situation.
- Dissatisfied clients have a cumulative effect, and complaints escalate if not resolved.

Questions Regarding Service Complaints

- What is your service strategy in handling complaints?
 - What is the biggest and most frequently occurring customer complaint?
 - What is missing in your organization that is permitting this problem to reoccur?
 - If possible, what one change would you make to improve the quality of responding to complaints?
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25

25



Effectively Responding to Difficult Clients

What you expect from a situation
is usually what you get.

26

26

"The cost of fixing the wrong, making amends, making it right, creating a memorable recovery and adding something unexpected to the customer is always less than the cost of an upset (angry) customer and a negative story about you that is retold for years."

Have you got . . .

An angry customer? A customer with a problem?

A customer with a question? A customer with a need?

Congratulations . . . you've got an opportunity!"

Jeffrey Gitomer, Author

Customer Satisfaction is Worthless

The First Step To Resolving Complaints

Remember, it is not you against the **CLIENT** and their problem

It is you and the **CLIENT** against the problem.

27

27



Difficult World & Clients

Why?

Why?

Why?

28

28

When Communication Challenges Come . . .

Use All Of Your Tools - By Doing The Opposite

- Listen when you feel like talking back.
- Ask questions when you feel like telling the answers.
- Suspend reaction when you feel like striking back (build bridges).
- Find areas of agreement when you feel like pushing your way.
- Make it easy for them to say yes.

Communication Challenges

Every obnoxious behavior is a cry for help.

People who feel good about themselves don't fight.

29

29

Effectively Responding To The Difficult Person

Mistakes to Avoid

1. Avoiding Conflict Altogether
2. Being Defensive
3. Over-Generalizations
4. Being Right
5. Having A "Monopoly-On-Truth" Attitude
6. Focusing On Their "Personality Disorder"
7. Forgetting To Listen
8. Focusing On Their Faults
9. Trying To Win The Argument
10. Making Character Attacks
11. Stonewalling

30

30

Calming the Angry / Upset Client (Slide 1 of 2)

- Speak softly, but assertively.
- Tell them your name and offer your handshake.
- Isolate them where possible.
- Sit down when possible -- motion for them to sit.
- Offer them something . . . to drink, sit, read, copy, etc.
- Let them get it out.
- Use their name.
- Restate what you hear and ask questions.
- Say to them "thanks for . . ."
- Offer alternatives -- talking about what you can do.

"Small - minded people fight with their fists and clubs. Petty minded people, who are just a notch above them, fight with their mouths, and truly big minded people don't fight at all."
~ David Schwartz, Author, *The Magic of Thinking Big*

31

31

Calming the Angry / Upset Client (Slide 2 of 2)

- Say, "I'm sorry . . .," and "I do want to help you."
- Use "powerful" words -- avoid words that create problems.
- When talks break down, go back to points of agreement.
- Say, "Please call me back if you haven't heard from me by . . ."
- Do something right now.
- Say, "I am a specialist in this matter."
- Get others with knowledge involved.
- Under promise and over deliver.
- Give written guidelines.
- Whenever possible, be their advocate -- not their adversary.

"Don't fight, make it right. Fix the problem & the bad behavior will go away."
~ Hardee's Restaurant Complaint Handling Policy

32

32

When They Seem Upset At You, Stop, And Ask,

"Have I done something to upset you?"

"I'd like to help. Please give me a chance."

"I would like to be on your side in getting to a solution."

"I would really like to correct this."

Good Question for Tough Interchanges . . .

When this conversation is over, whose behavior do I want to remember as most professional and most positive?

33

33

Statements For Difficult Encounters

- I want to work this out with you.
- I understand we have a different perspective.
- I want to explain my reason.
- I want to make sure I understand.
- I get the sense that you are only saying yes to agree with me.
- Are you interested in working this out with me.
- I understand your feelings.

Communication Breakdowns!

"It is difficult to wrestle with internal demons – to experience strife at the core of your being – and at the same time behave graciously towards others."

34

34

Analyzing Lessons Learned For The Next Time

1. What worked?
2. What mistakes did I make?
3. What opportunities did I miss?
4. What is the learning?
5. What skill can I take into the next challenge?

"I am going to be meeting people today who talk too much - people who are selfish, egotistical, ungrateful, but I won't be surprised or disturbed, for I can't imagine a world without such people."
~ Marcus Aurelius

35

35

Keeping Cool, Calm, Collected When Working With Clients

"Everything can be taken from a person but one thing; the last of the human freedoms – to choose one's attitude in any given set of circumstances, to choose one's own way."

~ Victor Frankel, Auschwitz Prisoner
Author *Man's Search for Meaning*



36

36

Stress is . . .

Our internal response to the outside world.

Stress originates . . . not out there, but . . .
only in our mind.

Our Thinking . . .

Makes it so!



37

37

Characteristics Of Those Who Are Best Able To . . .

Handle Stressful Situations & Difficult People

- **High Self-Esteem (Sense Of Worth)**
- **Feel They Can Control World Around Them**
- **Are Challenged By Change**
- **Are Committed & Intensely Involved In What They Do**
- **Regard Challenge As An Opportunity To Grow**

*"The greatest weapon against stress is our
ability to choose one thought over another."
~ William James*



38

38

Keeping Cool, Calm & Collected When the Pressure Is On

- Have "escape routes".
- Remind yourself of your good qualities.
- Talk to yourself.
- Set realistic goals and expectations.
- Take care of number one.
- Establish quiet time.
- Accept change.
- Focus on areas you can control.
- Negotiate and re-engineer pressure situations.
- Learn how to spot your stress warning signals.



Slide 1 of 3
39

39

Keeping Cool, Calm & Collected when The Pressure is On

- Have an optimistic view of the world . . . focus on the positive.
- Be flexible in your attitudes . . . you may not know the full story.
- Spend 80% of your time focusing on solutions.
- Learn to walk away from stressful situations.
- Use your body as an early warning signal.
- Maintain your network and support groups.
- Have a reward system.
- Control the stories you tell yourself.
- Learn to avoid, alter, adapt, or accept uncontrollable situations.



Slide 2 of 3

40

40

Keeping Cool, Calm & Collected When the Pressure Is On

- Forgive, forget, let it go, get over it, and move on.
- Know when to rely on the "Serenity Prayer."
- Go with the flow.
- Learn to say "no" – don't over-commit.
- Don't brag about being stressed or overloaded.
- Have a positive can-do mental attitude.
- Maintain sensible perspective and a sense of humor.
- Warm up to your job or find a new one.



And, Finally . . .

- ✓ Don't re-live the story with co-workers and speak poorly of a client.
- ✓ Count your blessings! Be grateful that you will get a paycheck this month, can purchase the foods you want, and have a place to sleep tonight.
- ✓ Your client may not be so fortunate.

Slide 3 of 3

41

41

The End . . .

Thank You!

* * * * *

See You At the Top!



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42

42